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SENSITIVE  
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DEPT FOR AF A A/S CARTER, SE GRATION, AF/SPG, AF/C, IO, PRM  
NSC FOR MGAVIN AND HUDSON  
DEPT PLS PASS USAID FOR AFR/SUDAN, USAID/W DCHA SUDAN  
ADDIS ABABA ALSO FOR USAU

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TAGS: [EAID](#) [ASEC](#) [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [KPKO](#) [SOCI](#) [AU](#) [UNSC](#) [SU](#)  
SUBJECT: UN AND DONORS MEET ON THE HUMANITARIAN SITUATION IN SUDAN

REF: A) KHARTOUM 318  
B) KHARTOUM 313  
C) KHARTOUM 311  
D) KHARTOUM 306  
E) KHARTOUM 299

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SUMMARY  
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¶1. (U) BEGIN SUMMARY. On March 20, in a specially called meeting, UN humanitarian officials briefed donor principals on the current situation and UN efforts to facilitate addressing the humanitarian gaps and current crisis fueled by the Government of National Unity's (GNU) expulsion of 13 international organizations. During the meeting, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator in Sudan Toby Lanzer presented preliminary results from the joint UN-GNU assessment of affected areas in Darfur. UN staff and international donor representatives discussed the current situation, the pending assessment, and the continued consternation, confusion, and concern regarding humanitarian operations in Sudan. END SUMMARY.

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CONVERSATIONS ON CURRENT NEEDS, REALITIES, AND RESPONSES  
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¶2. (U) On March 20, CDA Fernandez attended a specially held Friday evening UN Donor Principals' Meeting chaired by the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary General for Sudan Ameerah Haq. Haq briefed Principals' on the current situation and UN efforts to facilitate addressing the humanitarian gaps and current crisis fueled by the GNU's expulsion of 13 international organizations noting that the UN is focused on finding a way for humanitarian agencies and donors to work within the new and ever-changing environment in Sudan. Haq was joined by Hilde Johnson, the Deputy Executive Director of the UN Children's Fund (UNICEF). During the meeting, the UN Humanitarian Coordinator for Darfur, Toby Lanzer, presented preliminary results from the joint UN-GNU assessment of affected areas in Darfur. Overall, Lanzer noted strong collaboration across Darfur between UN country team officials and GOS officials tasked with the assessments and agreement on numbers affected in South and North Darfur, but not in West Darfur. According to preliminary assessment results, the expulsions have left significant humanitarian gaps and those gaps need to be addressed. If the gaps proceed unaddressed, the international community will be faced with major problems on the ground in the next few months. On March 21, the UN and Sudanese government counterparts met to consolidate findings from the visits to the three Darfur states. On March 22, the technical teams plan to present findings to the GNU Humanitarian Aid Commission (HAC) and the UN and on March 23, result findings will be presented to the donors.

14. (SBU) Johnson made it a point to note that the UN Secretary General has taken a personal engagement regarding the issues of non-governmental organization (NGO) expulsion, and continues to call for a reversal of the decision. In addition, the Secretary General continues to speak to the impact the expulsions will have on the humanitarian situation. Highlighting the UN's three track approach of (1) advocating for a reversal of the decision; (2) ensuring that life-saving operations continue; and (3) seeking medium and long-term solutions, Johnson noted that the UN continues to work to identify the gaps and look at how the next two to three months can be managed by the remaining humanitarian agencies. The UN is currently focused on tracks 1 and 2. Cautioning that the current situation should not create paralysis, Johnson emphasized the longer view focusing on the overall implications and the need to ensure calm and that the process for implementing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) gets back on track and proceeds. Charge Fernandez commented that the expulsion of the NGOs effectively "shredded" cooperation with the SPLM and put CPA under pressure. Prior to announcing the decision, the National Congress Party (NCP) did not even consult senior Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM) officials in the Government of National Unity. As a result, if anyone has caused the CPA to go off track it was the NCP. As the situation progresses, the international community and donors need to be clear regarding who has put Sudan into the current tense situation. According to Fernandez, this is standard NCP tactic: escalate and then negotiate about the escalation. Rather than giving in to such machinations, Fernandez urged fellow donors and UN staff to be firm and tough with the NCP. Indeed, the entire international and humanitarian community continues to try to clean up the mess caused by the disastrous and irresponsible decisions made by the NCP.

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15. (SBU) Johnson remarked on the GNU's recent public shift to "Sudanization" of aid that "in an ideal world every government would be in a position to take responsibility for its own citizens", and noted that UN agencies and the international community would like to see that national capacity is augmented and the country and government can take responsibility. However, she noted that problems with the proposed Sudanization is that domestic organizations do not have access throughout Darfur, insecurity exists, capacity does not exist, and essential technical capacities cannot be built in two- to three-month timeframe or even within a year. To this the Canadian Charge asked why the international community had not heard about "Sudanization" until now. If Sudanese non-governmental organizations (NGOs) had the capacity and the humanitarian motivation then the groups would already be taking an active and lead role in providing assistance and the international community would support them. Rather, it is not just the question of capacity but also one of will and motivation.

16. (SBU) Agreeing with Charge Fernandez, the Canadian representative noted that the repeated tactic of the NCP is to escalate and then negotiate and that, to date, the GNU has offered little detail regarding the funds to support the local organizations. The British Ambassador asked about further clarification on the impact of "Sudanization" on remaining NGOs. Recalling GNU HAC statements, UN staff noted that the government sees "Sudanization" as a process that will take longer than a year, perhaps two-to-three years. Returning to the issue of nationalizing the NGOs, participants noted that the NGO expulsion was directly a result of the arrest warrant and that the nationalization process sends a strong message to the armed opposition groups that the NCP wants more control over the camps. This is consistent with statements from Bashir and participants noted concerns that the expulsion of international NGOs could lead to significant increase in tension in the camps and between the Sudanese government and remaining INGOs. Johnson noted that the UN is not advocating for Sudanization if local capacity is lacking. Noting that the results of the joint assessment remain pending, Johnson cautioned that additional elements, such as any future massive population movements may encumber the humanitarian community's already limited ability to respond to the unfolding crisis. In that sense, the expulsions have already shattered the ability of the international community to respond quickly to future

crises in Darfur.

17. (SBU) Responding to a query of how donors should respond to questions from NGOs regarding whether the donors could consider specific activities for funding, Johnson said it may be too early to answer the question and the UN is also experiencing a limited ability to respond, due to the fact that many of the UN's counterparts are the expelled NGOs. Despite the current difficulties and the uncertain road ahead, UN staff cautioned that humanitarians are not yet in a position to advise on medium- and long-term programs. Rather, as the situation progresses, the international and humanitarian communities will need to have a coherent and coordinated approach. Noting that no one is well served by individual decisions on issues affecting the entire community, UN staff underscored the importance of a collective decision on how to approach such issues. In order to facilitate continued communication and an overall collective approach, UN staff committed to have meetings with donors to develop a joint approach to the critical issues. Commenting on the need for a coordinated position, the Japanese Ambassador noted that the Security Council is divided, the international community is divided, and while traditional donors are unified, others may have differing opinions on how to deal with the Sudanese government at this time. In addition, given the GNU's efforts to further divide the donor community, (NOTE: Bashir only invited the Arab and Asian Ambassadors to Darfur and the regime is making a special effort to woo Arab and Islamic NGOs to fill the gap created by the expulsions. END NOTE.) it remains difficult for embassies to have a unified position. UN staff noted that the Secretary General continues to reach out to the Arab League and the African Union, out of concern that the international community will not be unified on the humanitarian imperative.

18. (SBU) Lanzer described the situation in South Darfur as extremely concerning and tense for any Westerners there and called on donors to be as flexible as possible in their funding and movement of funds from one program to another in order to cover gaps in assistance. Noting that donors would be flexible to the extent possible, the German Ambassador and DFID representative noted that Sudanization can not mean the Sudanization of the principles of humanitarian assistance and that the international donors need to be clear regarding the minimum standards required, particularly to

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safeguard against the erosion of an already limited position. UN staff noted that agencies do not plan to compromise on standards or technical capacity. The Sudanese will not be well served by an approach that compromises principles. DFID underscored that the conversation of international expectations with the Sudanese government has to be clear, including requirements and modes of operation stating that the approach can not be "not at any cost in any way". Of particular note is that fact that not a single NGO currently has a technical agreement signed by the federal level HAC. This absence should be at the top of the list of discussion points for the UN's discussions with the GNU HAC. DFID warned of a "race to the bottom" as the regime seeks to manipulate the international community's very real humanitarian concerns in Darfur.

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PRELIMINARY READ OUT FROM THE JOINT ASSESSMENT  
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19. (U) Lanzer also provided an initial, unofficial read out from the joint UN-GNU assessment to Darfur. (NOTE: Particulars on the situation in South Darfur to follow in septel. END NOTE.) According to Lanzer, the mission included all three Darfur states, examining food, health, nutrition, shelter, non-food items (NFI), and water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) gaps. Lanzer noted that the team did not have adequate coverage of rural areas and the full impact of the expulsions will have to be determined by extrapolation rather than observation. Staff from four lead UN agencies participated in the assessment, including the UN World Food Program (WFP), UNICEF, the UN World Health Organization (WHO), and UN Joint Logistics Center (UNJLC). In addition, GNU counterparts from state ministries and the GNU HAC also participated.

¶10. (SBU) According to Lanzer, humanitarian staff had surprisingly good access during the assessment, driving to Muhajeria from Nyala, South Darfur, and flying into eastern Jebel Marra, West Darfur (the regime had blocked UN access to some of these sites for months). During the assessment, Lanzer noted well-stocked health clinics run by local staff however questioned how long the staff and stocks will remain. Urging international support, Lanzer noted that the international community will have to monitor the situation closely, noting the importance that local insecurity will have on the access throughout Darfur citing examples of officials coming into the camp dressed as NGO staff members and incidences of GNU security officials driving NGO vehicles which still bear the organizations' logos and license plates. UN staff noted that the current situation may actually present the humanitarian community with some opportunities for closer collaboration with the Sudanese government. In fact, during the coming days and weeks, the international community may find itself collaborating more significantly with line ministries and the line ministries would welcome that. He described overwhelmed local officials as asking the UN to weigh in with Khartoum on providing budget subsidies and material support with one noting "everything will be fine if you can supply us with 39 barrels of fuel a day" to keep pumps working and vehicles running.

¶11. (SBU) Charge Fernandez underscored the importance of watching Zam Zam internally displaced person (IDP) camp in North Darfur and asked about reports of GNU officials disguising themselves as NGO staff. Lanzer noted that he had spoke to the Wali (governor) of North Darfur twice recently regarding additional land for Zam Zam-area IDPs and that this had been refused. So there are going to be problems in that camp. In the coming weeks, the international community faces possible flashpoints in Zam Zam camp, Kalma and Zalingei camps as well.

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COMMENT  
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¶12. (SBU) It is clear that donors, the UN and NGOs are going to have to make the rules up as they along in this new working environment in Sudan. As we await the results of the GoS and UN assessments in Darfur, issues of access, technical agreements and legal frameworks continue to be problematic for humanitarian activity in Darfur, and despite assurances from the GoS, could further exacerbate the humanitarian fallout of the ICC indictment. In addition to the efforts of donor countries, donors need to continue pressing the UN to take a much more aggressive stance with the GNU to resolve pending issues before the humanitarian community fully commits to fill the humanitarian gaps. With all of the unresolved issues pertaining to access, technical agreements and legal frameworks, the international community may reach a stage where they have to take a ethical stance based on humanitarian principals instead of going on with business as usual in order to

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address the humanitarian imperative. The United States also needs to quietly but firmly keep warning Khartoum of American redlines regarding a deteriorating humanitarian situation in Darfur, before the situation really deteriorates.

FERNANDEZ